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towns, etc. It expresses the hope that the — Government will see in the points proposed, taken as a whole, an expression of the desire to approach that lofty ideal of International Justice which is the constant goal of the entire civilized world.

"By order of my government, I have the honor to lay the above communication before you, and to add that the time at which the proposed Conference should assemble at The Hague might be the second half of next July (new style), the Dutch Government on its side sharing the opinion that this date will be the most suitable.

"Hoping for a reply from the — Government with as little delay as possible, I seize the occasion," etc.

The Solidarity of Nations, as Shown by the Peace Heroes of Courrières.

BY DR. ERNST RICHARD, OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

Mont Pelée, Calabria, Mt. Vesuvius, Courrières, San Francisco,—how many names might be given recalling unspeakable misery, but at the same time landmarks of human solidarity, testimonials of human sympathy that does not know differences of race, nationality or class, sources of hope for those who believe in the possibility of lasting international friendship. "The International Heart" is the title of an article by Bertha von Suttner on the Courrières disaster, in which she sees the time come when this sporadic international sympathy will become organized and centralized, ever ready to help and to send rescue parties in all directions. At the same time, the great peace worker does not fail to point out the incongruity of this universal pity with the cruelty shown by these same people, who, under the conditions of war, will not only rejoice over, but will be instrumental in bringing about, a much more terrible disaster than the one about which they now are mourning, and in killing not 100 or 1,000, but 10,000 or 100,000 men.

Of all the great disasters of which the last months have been so sadly full, the catastrophe in the Courrières mines, where on the 10th of March of this year over 1,200 miners lost their lives by the explosion of coal gases, invites observations of this kind by reason of the singular manner in which, on this occasion, human solidarity was expressed. This is not simply because this sympathy found an especially emphatic expression in the country of the so-called hereditary enemy of France. It is true, instantaneous financial aid came from all classes in all parts of Germany, the German Peace Societies taking the lead in collecting funds, the great mining syndicates sending several hundred thousand francs, the miners collecting among themselves 250,000 francs for the stricken families of their fellow-laborers. But aid of this character had been given to each other by both nations before; there was nothing unusual about it.

But the assistance lent by the Germans to the French in this case had one phase which has attracted the attention of the world in an extraordinary degree: it is as if *the Germans had gained the greatest victory in their history*, a victory not won by an immense army with sword and cannon, but by a single squad of twenty-one laborers, who displayed all the wonderful qualities so often claimed as a monopoly of the military hero, not in a work of destruction and hate, but in one of love and

rescue. The five minutes of quiet march of these unassuming men from the railroad station at Billey-Montigny to the entrance to Shaft No. 2 seemed to bring order into the chaos, the light of hope to utter despair. I shall try to show the immense significance of the action of the German miners, not so much by direct description as by setting forth the impression it has made on others. In citing newspaper reports I shall confine myself to non-German, especially French, papers.

As to the arrival of the German rescue squad, consisting of miners from Gelsenkirchen and Herne, under the leadership of Fire Inspector Hugo Koch, and Mining Superintendent Hermann Meyer, himself the inventor of some most effective rescuing apparatus, I take the report of the *Paris Temps*, a paper which in the Morocco question took a very adverse stand against Germany. It may not be amiss to point out that the action of the Westphalian miners was perfectly spontaneous; neither the Kaiser nor the government had anything to do with it; and the Hibernia mines, from which they came, are not under government control. It was simply the hearts of these men of the people that bade them risk their lives in assisting their French comrades.

The correspondent of the *Paris Temps* tells us that, coming to the railroad station on the 14th of March, he saw descend from a passenger car about twenty travelers in German uniforms, who immediately went to the baggage car and took from it a number of curious objects. "I became curious," continues the writer, "approached one of them, who apparently gave directions, and introduced myself. 'Hugo Koch', he answered. I asked him to kindly supplement his laconic information, and then he said: 'My traveling companions and myself belong to the Hibernia Mining Company. We possess such an excellent apparatus and material that the Courrières Company asked us the day after the catastrophe to place an outfit at their disposal. We have done more, and have come ourselves. These are my men; I am their leader.'"

We learn from the same source that within five minutes the Germans were at the entrance of Shaft No. 2; that within three-quarters of an hour the first signal was given that announced the success of their endeavors, the first bodies were found and sent up to the surface. The work was continued with increasing success. In the meantime, while proceeding with their work of rescue, the Germans instructed their French comrades in the handling of their apparatus. After five days some of the Germans returned home. After three weeks the last group of three departed for Germany, leaving their apparatus behind for their French brethren, who had become familiar with it.

While satisfied in the consciousness of a well-performed duty, their hearts were sad, because, with all their risk of being crushed under falling rocks or suffocated by smoke, or finding their death by inhaling poisonous gases, they had not succeeded in bringing up any of their French comrades alive. All the world, that had anxiously watched them, felt with them. Everybody had hoped that they would receive this most gratifying reward of their bravery. When they arrived at Brussels the startling news reached them that thirteen men who had been imprisoned for twenty days in the gruesome tomb had found their way to daylight. Thus, after all, they had

helped to save a few lives, to bring consolation to a few grief-stricken families.

This is a short account of the facts. The Germans knew well that the apparatus alone was not the reason why the Ruhr mining district had become known as the best prepared for such calamities. Not only their apparatus, which, of course, could only be used after special instruction in its application, but also their men hold a singular position in the mining world as to their fitness for rescue work. In the mining school at Bochum the miners and their foremen receive special training in rescue work, which, from year to year, is more and more developed. Besides historical and theoretical courses, there are two buildings especially devoted to this branch. One contains a diving shaft nine feet in width and sixty feet in depth, where an experienced diver instructs in work incidental to the flooding of shafts and galleries. The other building contains shafts and galleries fitted out like an actual mine, partly so narrow that one can just squeeze through creeping. Before practice begins, this space is filled with smoke, produced by the burning of fuming substances, not so very dense at the beginning, but denser and denser as the course proceeds. Here the miners have to use the air-hose and the oxygen apparatus, and to build dams and walls under just such conditions as they had to meet at Courrières. While they are at work they are under continuous observations through glass windows from the outside, and danger signals are on hand. As the men from Herne and Gelsenkirchen hastened to France, so the rescue squads of all the Westphalian mines are accustomed to rush to each other's assistance in times of need. All this is not due to governmental provision, but is the outcome of private enterprise and organization.

When the Germans arrived in Courrières they had in their possession the plans of the French mines, which enabled them to find their way in every gallery and corner without guidance.

To repeat the expressions of admiration for the work of these men would mean to publish an anthology of the sublimest human sentiment expressed in that beautiful language natural to the true enthusiasm of the heart. I select a few of those which put special emphasis on the side of international solidarity.

After describing the horrors of the accident and its consequences, the correspondent of a Swiss paper, the *Neue Züricher Zeitung*, says: "Just as indelible, however, as are those sombre impressions will be the gratitude and joy I was permitted to witness, the awakening in all hearts of the feeling of human, brotherly solidarity aroused by the self-sacrifice of the Westphalians as none of us has ever yet felt it before. The feeling of the beauty of that German deed of rescue went through me like a strong hot stream that washed away everything small and indifferent, and aroused a feeling as if one had himself become a purer, a better man through what the others had accomplished. What was greatest in this deed of the Germans, however, was not the deed itself, but the quiet, matter-of-fact way in which the Westphalians risked their lives in order to reach their dead French comrades. Simply and unerringly they performed their duty without looking to the right or the left, made no fuss, and were astonished that others made so much of their accomplishment."

"Is it not," says Professor Edward Suess, of Vienna, in an Austrian paper, "in so many great disasters, as if an angel descended to tell us that there are heights into which the strife of everyday life will not rise, and to awaken a note of humanity, heard, alas! too rarely? . . . Now German miners descend with their rescuing apparatus into French shafts — and if a similar disaster had occurred on the German side and the French had been correspondingly well equipped, who would doubt a moment that both the readiness and the reception would have been the same? The courage of men has not yet been extinguished, nor faithfulness to duty even unto death. There are hours when classes and nations learn to respect each other, and this gives hope."

Of greater interest are the utterances of the French themselves. A few I should like to translate. The first are from the *Patrie*, a paper of strong jingo-tendencies: "I never shall forget the impression made by the arrival of these semi-soldiers in German uniforms when they marched suddenly through the workingmen's streets filled with a reeking mass of humanity, of these Germans, who brought to their French comrades in Courrières, along with some hope, that consolation which is imparted by noble endeavor. Under these gray-blue uniforms hearts were felt to beat, noble hearts that, without fear, went to meet danger." The correspondent declares their whole carriage and behavior as simply exemplary, and mentions, especially, that they would accept no compensation. "Of course," he says in conclusion, "special honors are demanded on all sides for these men who have done such signal service to international solidarity, the effect of which must not be underestimated."

The readers of the *ADVOCATE OF PEACE* will perhaps find their feelings best met in an article of the *Gil Blas*, from which I take the following: "The indescribable difficulty of bringing assistance to those who may still survive increases the general frenzy. Then you see arrive in Courrières a train with rescuers, who, equipped with special apparatus, are able, though constantly exposed to great and terrible danger, to descend into the shafts. These rescuers come from Germany. They are miners who come to assist their French comrades. This is something thrilling and memorable. For a year we have been told only of war with Germany; that we shall be obliged to kill many Germans, and that many must find their death on our side. Why? Nobody indeed knows exactly why. Perhaps because the officer who will be in command at Casablanca, a place of whose existence hardly ten Frenchmen have any knowledge, is to be a Belgian. Serious people assure us of it. There are even madmen who seem to desire it. Then the German is represented to us as an ogre thirsting for our blood; and we ourselves are in Germany considered as cannibals. There must be fighting; war is necessary, is good. . . . For a year this sword of Damocles has been hanging over our heads. For six weeks they have been haggling at Algeciras. And hundred of times the ominous cry has been heard: 'An understanding is impossible!' . . . Much more thrilling and significant than the talk of the diplomats is the action of the Germans."

In another number the same paper recommends that the Germans should receive the highest distinction the French government has at its disposal for such noble deeds — the cross of the Legion of Honor; a reward that

actually was accorded to them. The first public recognition of the significance of their deed came from a man well-known to all friends of peace, in the shape of the following dispatch: "The Arbitration Group of the French Parliament express their heartiest thanks to the German miners who hastened to the rescue of their brethren in France, and congratulate them that, by this impressive manifestation in these days of mourning, they have confirmed the increasing solidarity which is bringing the nations nearer to each other. (Signed) D'ESTOURNELLES DE CONSTANT."

Other French senators and deputies had special medals struck to honor the brave men. Modestly they declined an invitation to go to Paris, where special ovations were planned for them, just as they had not thought of interrupting their important work when the French Minister of the Interior, Clémenceau, had come to the entrance of the mine to have them introduced to him and express to them the thanks of his country.

Nor did the Germans at home, usually very slow in recognizing acts of plain duty, fail to express their pride in their countrymen. The extraordinary honors accorded to them at home can only be explained as an expression of appreciation of the importance of the action in the furtherance of international amity. They were presented to the Emperor, by his special wish, and received medals; they were the guests of the city of Krefeld, where this presentation took place; the Hibernia Mining Company has granted them diplomas of honor and will erect a bronze tablet with their names inscribed. Of course, more substantial rewards were not lacking. Now, the Singing Society of Dortmund, a city in the heart of the mining district, is preparing, on invitation, to participate in a concert in Paris for the benefit of the bereaved families of the French miners. In both the French and the German parliaments the events were the subject of discussion.

The Nationalist Liberal, Mr. Hilbeck, said in the Prussian *Diet*: "With our colleagues I should not like to be backward in my recognition, in my praise of the German miners at present in Courrières. Whoever has been under the necessity of assisting at such a catastrophe, either as a leader or as a miner, in wresting both dead and living from the hostile forces in the interior, knows that, in this atmosphere, with the carcasses of horses and the dead bodies of men, and in the galleries half-caved in, or threatening to break down, it requires more courage to undertake the work of rescue than to face an enemy in open battle. [Loud applause.] If these heroes of peace should return from their peaceful work decorated with the Iron Cross [the highest distinction in Germany for valor in battle], it would be but proper. For such work of peace, we have, unfortunately, no special distinction. . . ."

Mr. Hilbek closed this speech as follows: "As pitiful a catastrophe as it is, as terrible a misfortune for those left behind, still there is one element of consolation. Such events make the strife of nationalities, of nations disappear; such events bring men nearer to men, nation nearer to nation. It will make people think of what unites us, to work out in common the great problems of culture. It will, I hope, lead in times to come to the creation, in the common work for the highest that is set for men to do, of a better protection of our boundaries than we now have in cannon and bayonets." [Loud applause.]

The miners themselves have repeatedly expressed their astonishment that so much has been made of their action. I am sure that of all the expressions of admiration and gratitude they have enjoyed none more than the greetings of the thirteen French miners who, after all, had saved their lives in consequence of the German efforts. As soon as they heard of the work of their foreign comrades they sent the following dispatch: "The miners escaped from the catastrophe thank their German brethren from full hearts for their self-sacrifice and bravery." This telegram was followed by a letter, which in its touching simplicity needs no comment. Mr. Némy, the brave leader of the survivors, wrote: "To the German rescuers: How great was our joy when we heard that you had come to make a brave attempt to rescue us. We see, dear friends, that all race controversies disappear when it is a question of committing an act of devotion. In our prison we spoke of war and asked ourselves for what reason they wanted to fight, but at our return into daylight we learned that you had come to our assistance. You see, dear friends, how great our joy has been! We thank you from full hearts and should take pleasure in being permitted to show you our sincere gratitude. I shall do all in my power to be able to express our thanks personally and to tell you of our sufferings. Accept the assurance of our purest friendship. — For the Thirteen, HENRI NEMY."

Let us, in conclusion, see what lessons this great disaster has given us. In this dreadful hour of need the French forget all false national pride, and, in a moment when the political conditions seem to have heated the national passions to the point of bursting out into the flames of war, go for assistance to their old enemy, confident that their demand will find a generous response. He who knows the history of Franco-German relations will not find it superfluous to call attention to this act of self-abnegation. Then there appears on the field the small corps of German miners ready to lay down their lives in the service of their French brethren. They exhibit all the supposedly military virtues — bravery, coolness in the face of deadly danger, persistence, the spirit of self-sacrifice, discipline and efficient training lifted out of the butcheries of the battlefield into the sublime sphere of human brotherhood, exhibited, not under the lash of furious, blind passion, which degrades men into beasts, but under the dictate of the highest duty, which exalts men to the highest possible level. Adding to this the well-known generosity of the French people, their admiration for human greatness and the expressions of their gratitude, are we not right in saying, "This little group of workingmen has gained a greater victory than did the vast armies of 1870?" These reconquered the provinces, and left behind them a nation full of hate and revenge; the others have conquered forty millions of hearts filled with admiring remembrance and grateful love.

The Cost of a Battleship to Help the Famine-stricken Japanese.

From the Boston Transcript, April 3.

The people of the United States have been lately urged by President Roosevelt to make generous contributions in aid of the sufferers from famine in Japan.